

DCC assists DND and the Jamaica Defence Force

An exercise in Jamaica is providing not only an opportunity for DCC to support DND and the Jamaica Defence Force by constructing infrastructure in Jamaica, but also an excellent training platform for DCC personnel who are expected to deploy to Afghanistan.

DND's Operational Support Engineer Group is leading the exercise, through which Canadian Forces (CF) engineers and private local contractors are building classroom, workshop and accommodation facilities at three sites.

"This component of the exercise is being supported under the umbrella of the Military Training Assistance Program, or MTAP," says Shawn Helmerson, Program Support Officer for DCC's Military Operations Support office. MTAP assists developing allied militaries by providing such services as infrastructure construction and training through Canadian Forces military personnel.

The exercise has a second component, however: the work serves as a training platform for engineer troops (such as 1 ESU and others) who will be deployed to Afghanistan in the near future. The work in Jamaica is similar to the type and standard



From left: Warrant Officer Tim Lonsdale (1 Engineering Support Unit), Major Lewis (Jamaica Defence Force) and Darrell Stewart, Contract Coordinator (Defence Construction Canada) at Camp Moneague, Moneague, Jamaica. The camp's Operation Tropical Hammer is coming to an end. The project consists of the construction of a series of accommodation buildings, a training school, a library and a dining hall.

Photo courtesy of Sergeant Tracy Maurice, Canadian Forces.

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DCC AT WORK

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of design and construction that the military engineers can expect to see in Afghanistan, and it takes place in an environment that will closely simulate the operational tempo there.

"This is the main reason that DCC has been asked to participate in the exercise," notes Helmerson. "From the military operations perspective, DCC is quickly becoming a very solid partner in the delivery of operational projects by

Canadian Forces engineers. In Jamaica, DCC is providing very close support to DND in order to leverage the local construction industry as much as possible. We are involved in all aspects of construction contracting and contract management for the delivery of the infrastructure, and we're working very closely with the military engineers to develop the project's scope and deliver the desired results."

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CFB Suffield creates innovative Green Plan

At CFB Suffield, in the heart of southern Alberta's prairie grasslands, the base's new environmental program won't just be implemented by people across the base—it's actually being designed by them, from Canadian and British military members to civilian employees, contractors and military families.

"We're canvassing everyone for ideas about how to carry out the work of the base in a more environmentally sustainable way," says Susan Low, DCC Environmental Program Coordinator at CFB Suffield. "We're looking at energy efficiency, water conservation, waste reduction, pollution prevention, ecosystem protection and pretty much anything anyone can think of. And so far, the response has been amazing—I have an entire folder full of suggestions."

Low, whose background includes community stewardship and environmental programs, moved from Esquimalt to Suffield to focus on the base's Green Plan. She explains that with the plan's vision coming from Base Commander Lieutenant-Colonel Malcolm Bruce and the suggestions coming from the grassroots, literally everyone on the base will be involved in the far-reaching program.

"In CFB Suffield's case, we have a very unique piece of Canada," says Bruce. "Not only in the size and range of the training area, which is the largest in the Commonwealth, but in the fact that 458 square kilometres of the training area was designated in 2003 as a National Wildlife Area. That's why Suffield is very much aware of environmental issues. This is one of the last vestiges of native prairie grasses, where 14 species at risk are proliferating as a result of the area's management."

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From left: Karen Johnson, Reception Clerk, Chief Engineering Works Control; Ian Parkinson from the Water Treatment Plant; and Susan Low, Green Plan Coordinator.

He's clear on his goal to make Suffield the greenest base in the Canadian Forces. "I believe that if you don't have ownership and buy-in from those who are going to implement an endeavour, you're not going to be successful," he notes. "We aim to make thinking 'green' like thinking 'safety'—to instil that same conscious thought process, so that before we action any activity, we consider how we can make it more green, more environmentally friendly."

Low, who works closely with Base Environment Officer Wes Richmond, says that a committee of representatives from all stakeholder groups will award prizes for the most feasible and innovative suggestions, which will be implemented in phases. The first phase will include easy, budget-friendly items, such as behavioural changes and smaller programs that can be implemented at a reasonable cost.

The second phase will focus on technology. Activities will include incorporating environmental factors into project design plans and changing Base Standing Orders to institutionalize the Green Plan's goals. The third phase will cover more expensive capital projects, such as retrofitting buildings to accommodate energy-conserving appliances.

"The phases aren't necessarily entirely independent," Low notes. "Because we're looking at so many different areas and there are so many groups involved, we could be moving through the phases in different areas at different speeds."

Using water conservation as an example, she explains that Phase One could include talking to the base's workers and residents about how to effectively conserve water. Phase Two would establish baselines for current water use and would create policies to ensure that any new construction and renovation would include more water-efficient appliances, such as low-flow toilets, faucets and showerheads. Phase Three would look at replacing existing appliances with more water-efficient models.

"We want to get people thinking green in their day-to-day life, spreading the news of conservation and environmental protection as they do everything else," says Bruce. "I'm very proud of the efforts folks here are making, and I think the Green Plan is just one more way that they'll show their stuff."

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Defence Construction Canada (DCC) is a Crown corporation with a mandate to provide contracting, construction contract management and related services to the Department of National Defence (DND).

Dan Munroe left Comox for Jamaica on January 19, 2008, as the initial DCC representative, to start site preparation work and to get contracts set up as scope and designs were completed. He has now deployed to Afghanistan for a six-month tour. In March, Derek Lougher-Goodey of the National Operations Group Environmental Services Division moved into the position, followed by Larry Clinton of the

Atlantic Regional Office and Darrell Stewart from Gagetown, as the exercise moved into full swing.

The Military Operations Support office is currently planning a similar exercise in Jamaica this fall, along with other potential opportunities for this type of training. For more information about these, contact Shawn Helmerson at shawn.helmerson@dcc-cdc.gc.ca.